State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE RAYMOND A. HULL, *District 6*
Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

March 25, 2019

The Honorable Nicholas A. Mattiello
Speaker of the House
Room 323, State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am in receipt of your March 21, 2019 communication, co-signed with members of your leadership team—House Majority Leader Shekarchi, Majority Whip Edwards and Chairman Corvese of the House Rules. While your letter pointed to certain elements of the House Resolution Adopting the Rules of the House of Representatives for the Years 2019 and 2020, particularly Rule 33(a), it seems painfully evident you either failed to read Rule 33(b) or simply chose to disregard it in your apparent rush to admonish me.

That rule, in its entirety, reads as follows:

> "When a violation of Rule 33(a) in regard to voting is alleged in writing by a member, the Speaker may refer said written allegation to the House Rules Committee to investigate, hold hearings, ascertain the facts and report its findings and recommendation to the House, which may then take appropriate action including but not limited to expulsion as authorized by Article 6, Section 7 of the Constitution of the State."

It is possibly both the height of irony and arrogance for your leadership team to presume to take action against me for violating a House rule in a manner that blatantly violates another House rule. To my knowledge, there has been no referral made to the House Rules Committee. There has been no investigation conducted or hearings held by that body. And there certainly no findings of fact. It seems you are offering your letter as the allegation in writing of a "violation of Rule 33(a)" and trying to short-circuit the process, hoping to avoid a House Rules Committee investigation and asking me to take some sort of punishment your leadership team dreamed up to avoid the process set forth in the rules.

I suppose that having taken action to strip political opponents of State House office space and rejected efforts to reform the operations of the House of Representatives, you may have emboldened to continue to demonstrate a callous disregard for the House's "long tradition as a distinguished body" and to display "a lack of respect for the integrity" of this body and it's members. I find that truly disappointing, but not at all surprising. It is just another example of a leadership style that is more about coercion, exacting vengeance and the abuse of power than about respecting the integrity of every member and their role as duly elected members representing a group of constituents as important as your own.

Based on your actions and the lack of respect for House rules that you have displayed here, I am not going to dignify your violation of the rules by challenging this action. Rather, I simply reject it on its face as the action of an undisciplined leadership team content to display its contempt for the rules of the body, the rights of rank-and-file members and the people of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

Raymond A. Hull

616 MOUNT PLEASANT AVENUE
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02908